

## Point of View Lesson

### Primary Source Perspectives of the Civil War

#### Who's Telling the Story to Whom?

"Everybody knows the story of the Three Little Pigs. Or at least they think they do. But I'll let you in on a little secret. Nobody knows the real story, because nobody has ever heard my side of the story." So says the wolf as he introduces *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!* by Jon Scieszka.

Read the story to your class and discuss point of view. Ask students to examine how the point of view has been changed from the traditional version, in which it is very clear who are the good guys and who is the bad guy. In the "true" story, the wolf explains that he really wasn't doing anything wrong and that the pigs—the real villains—framed him.

Although *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!* is funny, it does make the point that two different newspapers might cover the same story differently depending on who their readers are and what those readers believe. For example, A. Wolf's story appears in *The Daily Wolf*. The other news reports appear in *The Daily Pig*. The wolf newspaper and the pig newspaper each seem to print stories that make their own kind look good. Ask students to write about the story of the three little pigs as if they had watched nearby when the wolf visited each of the pigs. Their stories can appear in a newspaper called *The Daily Human*. Have students think about how the story would change if the police were human. Would it become a story about human beings instead of pigs (e.g., "Police Save Pig")?

Discuss point of view in other well known stories—Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood, Hansel and Gretel, etc.—and brainstorm ways that these stories could be retold from the "bad guy" point of view.

Next, talk about your study of the Civil War. Whose point of view does the textbook or background information text mainly seem to represent? Would the textbook have been written differently if the South had won the war? Discuss with your class how a "true Confederate" would describe the South's secession from the Union or the Emancipation Proclamation.